

Bible Study – John 4: 43 – 5: 18

1. What are the messages the sign of the healing of the nobleman conveys? (4: 46 – 54). How do you understand faith in this incident? Does this have any similarities with the first sign in chapter 2?
 - a. The official's faith in this incident is seen as **a growing faith**. First, he believed enough to ask Jesus to help his son (Faith to approach – the nobleman travelled 14 miles uphill, from Capernaum to Cana). Second, he believed Jesus' assurance that his son would live, and he acted on it (Faith to act). Third, he and his whole house believed in Jesus. Faith is a gift that grows as we use it (Faith to acknowledge, accept, and submit).
 - b. Faith should not be limited to only for seeing signs and wonders (4: 48) rather it should grow up to the level of accepting Jesus and knowing him more and more
 - c. The second stage of faith involved **obedience**. The nobleman obeyed Jesus and went back home by believing Jesus' words.
 - d. The nobleman's request has two things: **a method and a need**. The method was a request to come to his home and the need was a request to heal his son. **Jesus met the request on his own terms** – the request for the method is rejected but the need is met. The nobleman's faith has grown when he accepted the rejection of the method and expressed his faith on Jesus' words.
 - e. The sign expresses Christ's mastery/authority over space. Both Christ words and the faith of child of God in Christ's words can beat any distances. The incident reveals that God's word doesn't have to travel any distance but God's omnipresence brings His Word to any place at the same time (4: 52).
2. What are the messages the sign of the healing at the pool conveys? (5: 1 – 15).
 - a. God is omniscient and he knows everything (every details of the life) 5: 6
 - b. With this sign, Jesus sets the man into motion and action. Jesus wants the man to move forward physically and spiritually¹. (5: 5, 8, 9, 14)
 - c. Jesus doesn't provide any guarantee of keeping away the man from sickness happening for the second time if he continues to sin (5: 14)
 - d. Helplessness is not an hindrance for the work of God to be revealed if one has a mind to be healed (5: 7, 8)
 - e. We do not have to point our fingers to anyone but to approach Jesus with a willingness
 - f. Jesus displayed the worship of God on a Sabbath day by bringing glory to the Father by displaying his work². Sabbath is the day God rested after completing all creations.

¹ The Greek word for ill/invalid has been used in different sense in the bible. It can denote the weakness of the body (want of strength or weakness – 1 Cor. 15: 43; 2 Cor. 13: 4; Gal 4: 13). The word also is used for the weakness of the soul (want of strength to understand a thing or to restrain corrupt desires – Heb. 5: 2; 7: 28; Rom 8: 26)

² Sabbath is the day God rested after completing all creations. Sabbath was the day given to Israelites to be rested and remember God and worship him. But the presence of sin, incompleteness of the OT ritual system and the failures of the Israelites distorted the meaning of Sabbath and the observance of the day. Here, the procreative act of Jesus on a Sabbath day talks about the incompleteness of the world due to sin. A display of God's work is the display of God's glory and honour and thus it is worshipping God the Father.

- g. After experiencing a miracle or a deliverance from Jesus, the first thing we should do is to take time to know him more and his purpose otherwise we will be trapped (5: 11, 12, 13).
- 3.
- a. The Jews couldn't rejoice in the displayed glory of God and in the healing of the man. Both these acts were impossible with them because of their lifestyle. They couldn't rejoice in seeing something happening which was impossible with them. They were too selfish
 - b. They scrutinized the incident to look for opportunity find accusation.
 - c. When they were accusing Jesus and the healed man they forgot see their own failures (Jer. 17: 21 – 27; Neh. 13: 15 – 19)
 - d. Jews couldn't recognize Jesus' act. They didn't realize that Jesus was not making him to do sin but freeing the man from the domain of sin.